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USAID FOR BORODIN/WARD

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SUBJECT: CONSUL GENERAL MEETS WITH NEW PALESTINIAN MINISTER  
FOR INFORMATION AND JUSTICE

Classified By: Classified by Consul General Jake Walles for reasons 1.4  
(b,d)

1. (C) The Consul General met the newly appointed Minister for Information and Justice Riad Malki on June 20 at the Ministry of Justice headquarters in Ramallah. Noting that he is the new government's spokesman as well as responsible for two significant ministerial portfolios, Malki said the job is not going to be easy, but he intends to work with the media "to ease tensions and expectations, especially in Gaza." He said his message to Gazans will be that they are a priority for the new government and the new government will return them to the PA. He said the new government will be judged by the improvements that it brings in personal security, and if people see such improvements, they will accept sacrifices for the government to succeed.

2. (C) Malki said he has been "shocked" by the poor capacity of the Justice Ministry. He noted that the Ministry's Ramallah office was "really an annex to the main Ministry in Gaza," but that "coming from the NGO world, where justice is a top priority," he expected more. He said he will try to empower the ministry to complement PM Fayyad's priority efforts to bring law and order. Malki said he wants to develop the skills and capacity of MoJ officials and is interested to discuss potential cooperation with USAID. Post will follow up with Malki to review previous USAID and PD efforts in the justice sector and examine options for resuming cooperation.

WALLES